



Project History

Building an alternate route on U.S. 95 on the eastern side of Sandpoint to reduce truck and vehicle traffic has been a topic of local interest since the 1940's. Several ideas were talked about in the community, however funding wasn't available to study a possible alternative route at that time.

In 1990 the Idaho Transportation Department formally began the environmental study process for the U.S. 95 North/South Alternate Route from Sagle to Ponderay. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was approved in 1999 and resulted in a Federal Highway Administration-issued Record of Decision (ROD) in May of 2000. The EIS and ROD established a two-lane Preferred Alternative along Sand Creek and opened the way for the final design phase of the project.

The Sand Creek Byway design shows a 2.1-mile long, roadway connecting U.S. 95 from the northern end of the Long Bridge directly to Idaho 200 and U.S. 95 north of Sandpoint. The Byway is a segment of the larger U.S. 95 North/South Alternative Route. Construction of the Sand Creek Byway is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2004 with an anticipated completion date in 2007.

ITD and the design team from Washington Group International and CH2M HILL have worked closely with the public on the design of the Sand Creek Byway project. A project office was opened in downtown Sandpoint in October 2000. Several task forces, community partnering meetings and public meetings, as well as input from a Citizen Design Advisory Committee, have led to proposed enhancements to the project including:

The addition of a southbound off-ramp at the south interchange.

The addition of an auxiliary southbound lane.

The addition of a shoreline extension of the east shoreline of Sand Creek from Bridge Street to the Cedar Street Bridge.

The modification of the planned continuous long bridge structure from the mouth of the Sand Creek to the Cedar Street Bridge.

The addition of a railroad embankment to help support a second railroad track that Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad is planning.

The development of the location and characteristics of the pedestrian and bicycle pathway.

The addition of three pathway habitat enhancement areas.

The modification of the north interchange to include a north loop on-ramp.

**Public Hearing
Spring 2004
Date TBA**

These design enhancements were not evaluated in the original EIS. In order to incorporate the enhancements into the design of the Byway, the design team has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) that examines potential impacts resulting from these enhancements.



The EA will soon be available for public review. A public notice in the Bonner County Bee will announce the availability of the EA at the following locations:

Sand Creek Byway Project Office
202 2nd Ave., Suite B
Sandpoint

Idaho Transportation Department
District 1
600 West Prairie
Coeur d'Alene

ITD Sandpoint Residency
30900 Hwy 200E
Ponderay

ITD Headquarters
3311 W. State St.
Boise

Sandpoint City Hall
1123 Lake St.
Sandpoint

Ponderay City Hall
288 4th St.
Ponderay

Sandpoint Library
1407 Cedar St.
Sandpoint

Federal Highway Admin.
3050 N. Lakeharbor Ln.
Boise

The public will have the opportunity to give oral and written testimony on the EA at a Public Hearing. The date, location and time of the hearing will be announced within the next few weeks.

What to expect at the hearing

ITD and project staff will be on hand to answer questions about the EA. The EA evaluates the potential environmental impacts of the Sand Creek Byway design enhancements. Large displays will illustrate the addition of a southbound off ramp at the southern end of the project, an earthen, vegetated wall and a shoreline extension to accommodate a section of the pedestrian and bicycle pathway.

Testimony may be written and left with project staff, given orally to hearing officers or mailed to:

Gwen Smith
Idaho Transportation Department
Public Involvement Coordinator
P.O. Box 7129
Boise, ID 83707-1129

All testimony received at the hearing or mailed to the Public Involvement Coordinator will become part of the official hearing document.

Project Enhancements

Shoreline Extension

The purpose of the extension is to provide a buttress for the highway embankment between Bridge Street and Cedar Street Bridge. It will also serve as a landscaped area for the pathway to continue along this portion of Sand Creek. The extension provides stability to the embankment and is more cost effective than an elevated structure along this section of highway.

Sand Creek Bridge/Vegetated Wall

The purpose of the changes to the bridge structure is to provide a more aesthetically pleasing view from downtown Sandpoint and to provide a smaller footprint for the piers into Sand Creek.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Pathway/Habitat Enhancement

The pedestrian/bicycle pathway is part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) approved in 1999. The Environmental Assessment develops the location and characteristics of the pathway. The pathway will provide a recreational amenity to the community as well as a corridor for alternative modes of transportation. The habitat enhancement areas provide seasonal habitat for birds, amphibians, aquatic mammals and fish along the east shoreline of Sand Creek and adjacent to the pedestrian and bicycle pathway.

North Loop Ramp

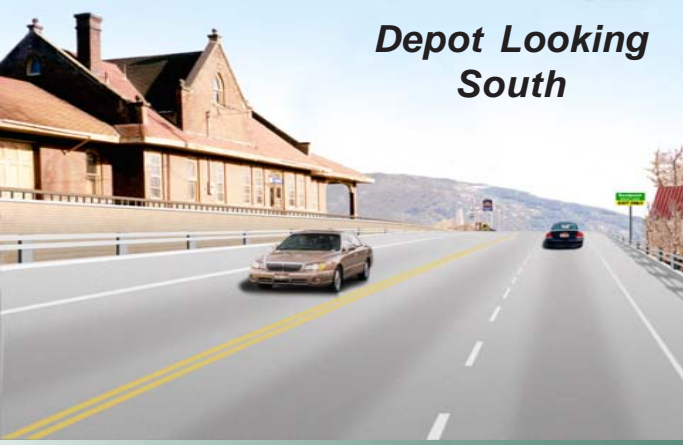
The North Loop ramp will provide a safe and efficient northbound access to the new U.S. 95 route from U.S. 2 and Idaho 200. The ramp eliminates left turn movements and reduces traffic conflict points and traffic congestion. The ramp design was modified from a diamond to a loop configuration to reduce land disturbance.

Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Embankment

The embankment is needed to help support a second railroad track that BNSF is planning parallel to and west of the existing track. Constructing portions of the railroad embankment as part of the Byway project will help prevent the second railroad track embankment from causing any future settlement of the realigned U.S. 95.

Southbound Off-Ramp/Auxiliary Lane

Extensive public input led to the addition of this off-ramp. The purpose is to provide an additional access point for southbound traffic into downtown Sandpoint and its vicinity. The auxiliary southbound lane (second southbound lane) is needed to maintain and ensure safety



For More Information on the
Sand Creek Byway Project
Please Contact:

Sand Creek Byway Project Office

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Sandpoint, ID 83864
Email us at: info@sandcreekbyway.com
(208) 265-0897

Idaho Transportation Department

Barbara Babic
District 1 Public Involvement Coordinator
(208) 772-1200

Visit the project website at:
www.sandcreekbyway.com

Mission Statement

*Our mission is to provide
an aesthetically
pleasing and functional
Sand Creek Byway
Project. We are committed
to meaningful public
involvement through
understanding and
responding to the
community's vision
for the Sand Creek
Corridor.*



Idaho Transportation Department
600 W. Prairie Ave.
Coeur d’ Alene, ID 83815

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